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ABSTRACT

Societal and educational pressures that are likely to affect postsecondary education personnel during the 1980's are discussed. These pressures include the declining number of 18- to 22-year-old students, changes in mandatory retirement policy, affirmative action, a continuing high rate of inflation, and uncertainty regarding taxpayer and donor support for postsecondary education. The strengths and weakness of several approaches to data collection are assessed using the following criteria: institutional burden, taxpayer cost, timeliness of data, and data quality. It is recommended that surveys like the Higher Education General Information Survey of postsecondary education personnel be continued and strengthened, with timely data reporting. A second approach to future data collection, longitudinal analysis of cohorts of faculty and nonfaculty personnel, is also proposed. These cohorts would be followed up on a 4-year cycle with the thrust of each survey varying somewhat from year to year. A third recommended approach would involve a series of one-time surveys on timely topics with quick turnaround time. The American Council on Education's Higher Education Panel is proposed as a model, and other data collection efforts are described briefly. A list of specific data elements for each approach is included. (SW)

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Sponsored Report Series

ISSUES IN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Personnel Challenges

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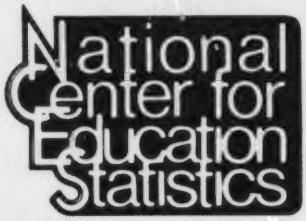

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FOREWORD

This paper is one of three commissioned by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) as part of the Postsecondary Education Core Design Project. NCES initiated the project in response to recommendations from the postsecondary education community. Its purpose was to identify and set priorities for the concerns of major postsecondary education decisionmakers and to translate these concerns into operational terms for implementation into NCES data collection activities.

To centrally coordinate and integrate the requirements of data users, NCES sponsored two conferences in Washington, D.C. The participants were informed that, through a series of meetings and papers, the project was designed to:

1. Identify major current and future issues and related data needs in postsecondary education and place them in priority ranking;

2. Separate out those significant issues and data needs for which questions might be included in the Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS);

3. Explore, through thought-provoking papers, the most crucial issues and their implications for long-term NCES data collection activities;

4. Translate the issues and data needs into operational data collection procedures; and

5. Provide both short-term and long-term recommendations for collecting postsecondary education data. Both sets of recommendations were to be gauged for future NCES data collection activities.

In addition to sponsoring the two conferences, NCES commissioned issue papers in three areas it deemed particularly important for consideration in its future data collection and dissemination plans. The papers were to be based upon discussions which occurred during the conferences. The three areas identified as being of significant concern in future NCES efforts were:

1. Financial Viability in Postsecondary Education Institutions

2. Personnel Challenges in Postsecondary Education

3. The Impact of Non-Traditional Students on Postsecondary Education

This paper addresses the issue of Personnel Challenges in Postsecondary Education and was authored by Dr. Jack E. Rossmann.

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ISSUE DEFINITION

Data alone will not solve the personnel issues which postsecondary education will confront during the next five to ten years. Problem resolution will require money, creativity and individual effort. But timely and accurate data can assist creative, hard working decision-makers in vital ways as difficult research allocation decisions are made at the institutional, State and Federal levels during the years ahead.

Errors of the past decade make it painfully clear that educational forecasting lacks accuracy. Best estimates, however, suggest several societal and educational pressures which are likely to have an impact on postsecondary education personnel during the next decade.

Declining number of 18- to 22-year-olds

The impact will vary by State and region of the country, but there is no doubt that in the country as a whole, the number of 18- to 22-year-olds entering postsecondary education will decline dramatically during the next ten years. In some institutions, the decline in the number of students of traditional age will be countered by increasing numbers of older students, students enrolling in continuing professional education programs, or other new sources of students. In most institutions, however, there simply will be smaller numbers of students to be taught. This in turn will have a significant impact on the number of new and continuing faculty members and supportive staff members who will be needed to provide teaching/learning experiences and services to students. McGee (1978) has stated: "(we are entering a period of) overstaffing in a period of declining enrollment, reduced support and proliferation of functional competition from non-collegiate sources". Lenning (1978) suggests that "numerous faculty will

undoubtedly have to be shifted or let go in many institutions; and unless such things are handled fairly, with tact and finesse, and with agreed upon criteria, faculty revolts may become commonplace".

Changes in mandatory retirement policy

Adding to the significant personnel issues which confront postsecondary education during the next decade is the legislation passed by Congress in 1978 which raises the mandatory retirement age for tenured faculty to 70 in 1982. Thus, during the next ten years, entry level teaching and staff positions in postsecondary education will be limited by both the decreasing number of students of traditional age and the probable increase in older faculty and staff members who exercise their option to remain fully employed for an additional period of time. Both of these difficulties point to the need for increasing opportunities for the continuing development, renewal and revitalization of faculty and staff members who remain employed at postsecondary institutions.

Inflation

Most current predictions suggest that a high rate of inflation will continue for the next several years. While inflation troubles many segments of our society, it created particular problems for the labor intensive enterprise of postsecondary education. Increased productivity and improved efficiency are very difficult without sacrificing quality.

Financing postsecondary education

As the number of students declines, it might be assumed that one could simply turn to other funding sources for increased support, e.g., taxpayers

and private donors. In an era when proposition XIII has come to symbolize taxpayer revolt, however, postsecondary education will be fortunate if it can even hold its own against the current anti-tax sentiment in society. Support from private donors may well be able to provide some additional funding for some institutions, but it should be noted that the majority of tax-supported postsecondary institutions simply do not have the mechanism at present for attracting significant amounts of money from private donors.

All of the above issues seem to point to increasing pressures, frustrations, and dissatisfactions among postsecondary education personnel during the next decade. In order to respond most effectively to these pressures, high quality data will be essential.

Personnel classification

There are many similarities among all personnel employed in institutions of postsecondary education, but there are also some very real differences among personnel categories. Perhaps the most complete classification system is the one developed by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS). NCHEMS has classified personnel by function and by program. The functional categories are as follows: instructional, professional, executive/manager, technical, office, crafts and crades, and service. The program categories are: instruction/research, public service, academic support, student services, institutional administration, physical plant, and independent operations.

While the NCHEMS classification scheme is useful and will be used in this paper, a less complete scheme will also be used on occasion. This will involve the distinctions among faculty personnel, professional non-faculty

personnel, and non-professional personnel. It will be important to keep in mind the differing data needs surrounding each of these three classifications.

ISSUE IMPORTANCE

Federal policy

There can be little doubt that a healthy and diverse postsecondary education system is of great importance to the Federal government and the Nation. Research such as that included in Bowen's recent book (Investment in Learning, 1978) makes it clear that today as in the past there are large economic and non-economic returns on our nation's investment in postsecondary education. If the Federal government is to make wise decisions, however, as to how best to maintain the strength of the postsecondary education system, quality data about personnel are needed to guide those decisions. Since such a large proportion of the postsecondary education dollar is spent for faculty and staff, data about personnel will play a key role in decision-making about Federal policy.

Nationwide data on faculty mobility, background and skills will be critical if predicted enrollment declines occur. National data on availability of Ph.D.'s are needed for purposes of affirmative action. There are proposed efforts to increase position vacancies in postsecondary education through developing large numbers of research opportunities for senior faculty members and through increasing the movement from postsecondary education institutions to positions within private corporations. If Federal policy is to be developed to support either or both of these efforts (or other similar ideas), data must be available on which to base

estimates of numbers by disciplines, type of institutions, region, etc.

Institutional needs

As postsecondary institutions have become increasingly dependent on the Federal government, any issue which affects most individual institutions is likely to impact the Federal government as well. While there are those who would contend that many of the problems are unique to individual institutions (i.e., let the weak institutions die), it is also clear that through support for graduate education, faculty research, affirmative action, support for the handicapped, etc., Federal policy has a major impact on personnel decisions in individual institutions. Thus, useful and timely data will benefit decision makers at the Federal policy level and many of the same data can also be useful to decision-makers at individual institutions. While it is true that some of the data can be collected by institutions and organizations other than the Federal government, many of the data simply can't be obtained in a meaningful fashion without the direct involvement of the Federal government.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF VARIOUS APPROACHES TO DATA COLLECTION

The strengths and weaknesses of several approaches to data collection will be assessed using the following criteria: institutional burden, cost, timeliness of data, and quality of data.

New annual surveys

This category of data collection procedures is perhaps best divided into new institutional surveys and new individual faculty or staff surveys. In terms of institutional burden, the message related to the possibility

of new annual institutional surveys is clear: Don't do it. Most postsecondary education institutions already feel overwhelmed with the paper work requirements of the Federal and State governments and other outside agencies. It is proposed, however, that new annual surveys sent directly to individual personnel (faculty and non-faculty) may be highly desirable and these would, of course, provide no burden to the institution where the data were being collected.

On the criterion of cost, any new independent annual survey will result in a significant increase in expenditures for data collection. Whether the data are to be collected in new annual surveys or existing surveys, they must be timely. While timeliness has improved significantly in the reporting of Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) data, the general perception of many researchers and administrators at postsecondary education institutions is that data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) will never be published in time to be useful at the institutional level. Thus, if new annual institutional surveys were to be undertaken, it should be done only if these new data can be reported within deadlines which allow the information to be useful to both Federal and institutional decision-makers.

Unless it is of high quality, even timely data will be of little use to either the Federal government or individual institutions. It is essential, therefore, that if either new institutional or new individual annual surveys are conducted, the instruments must be well-designed and the data collection process must assure a high rate of return from either the sample or universe being surveyed.

Inclusion in Future Replications of Existing Surveys

From the perspective of institutional burden, the most efficient way of collecting additional data is to build those data into existing surveys. Institutions may grumble about the preparation of HEGIS data, but most now have a mechanism to respond promptly and efficiently to the HEGIS data requirements. Costs to the government would also be minimized if new data requirements were simply added to existing HEGIS surveys.

The major problem encountered with existing HEGIS data has been the timeliness of reports. Improvements have taken place, but mechanisms must be developed for making it possible to report data within six months after those data have been collected. There seem to be few major concerns about the quality of the data which NCES now collects through the HEGIS package of instruments. This perceived high level of quality should, of course, be continued in any additions to currently existing surveys.

One-time surveys

One-time surveys can play a valuable role in providing decision-making data for postsecondary education. These surveys do add to the institutional burden and increase the governmental cost for data collection. They are, however, a good mechanism for collecting timely data on "issues of the moment", and if they are well-designed and well-conducted, can provide not only a quick turn-around time, but also data of high quality.

Sample versus universe surveys

In the proposed data collection model which follows, it is suggested that rather than thinking about sample or universe surveys, consideration

should be given to sample and universe surveys. For some purposes such as basic demographic data or salary data, it is essential to have data from all postsecondary education institutions (universe data). For other purposes, however, such as the collection of the data from individual personnel, or the collection of data on topics of the moment, well-designed, stratified random sample surveys will provide adequate data with less cost.

A MODEL FOR COLLECTING NATIONAL DATA ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PERSONNEL

This model makes two basic assumptions: 1. There must be a core of timely and accurate annual data which decision-makers know they can count on; 2. There should be an ongoing collection of longitudinal data from postsecondary education personnel themselves, especially faculty personnel.

The current National Longitudinal Study of students provides a model for the data collection process which should be used with postsecondary education personnel.

The 1972 American Council or Education national survey of faculty (directed by Alan E. Bayer) and the Ladd-Lipset 1977 Survey of the American Professoriate provide excellent examples of the substance of proposed faculty longitudinal surveys. Similar data should also be collected from non-faculty personnel on a periodic basis.

It is recommended that three basic types of data be collected on a systematic basis.

1. HEGIS data

As timeliness improves, Federal, State and institutional

decision-makers will come to rely more and more on the collection of a small amount of personnel data from the universe of postsecondary institutions. The data formerly collected by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) (now collected by NCES) and the Administrative Compensation Report collected by the College and University Personnel Association (CUPA) are vital to the planning needs of individual institutions of postsecondary education and are data which simply cannot be collected in any systematic fashion by the institutions themselves. It will become increasingly important to postsecondary institutions to have available to them authoritative data of this sort covering a long period of years.

2. Longitudinal surveys

During the next ten years, it will be imperative to have not only the baseline trend data on personnel which can be provided by the institutions on an annual basis (HEGIS data), but to have longitudinal data from individual faculty and staff members. It is only through these longitudinal data that reliable information can be developed on progress which is being made on issues of affirmative action and salary equity between the sexes, and on the migration of faculty and other professional staff members among institutions during periods of institutional retrenchment.

It is proposed that four separate stratified random samples of postsecondary education personnel be developed. Each of these samples then could be followed up on a four-year cycle. Two of the samples could be faculty samples with the core of the data

collected from each of those samples to be focused on different substantive areas. One of the samples for the longitudinal survey series could consist of administrative/executive personnel and the final sample could be comprised of other professional personnel. The data elements which might be included in these longitudinal surveys will be described in a subsequent section of this paper. The pattern of data collection among these four samples would be as follows:

Year 1----------Faculty sample A

Year 2----------Administrator/executive sample

Year 3----------Faculty sample B

Year 4----------Other professional sample

Year 5----------Faculty sample A

Year 6----------Administrator/executive sample

and so forth.

3. One-time surveys

The American Council on Education Higher Education Panel (HEP) has demonstrated over the last five or six years that useful and timely data can be obtained through well-designed, well-conducted one-time surveys. The Higher Education Panel has developed a national, stratified random sample of postsecondary institutions which have agreed to respond to periodic one-time surveys. Thus, response rate is high and the turn-around time is rapid. It is not being suggested that NCES develop its own Higher Education Panel. Instead, NCES should recognize the utility of the panel approach and use and support HEP efforts whenever possible.

It is anticipated that development of the model described above will result in a system of data collection that is on-going, longitudinal, flexible and one which will not require inordinate amounts of institutional staff time or governmental funding in order to collect the data.

OTHER CURRENT DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS

There are several current data collection efforts which have relevance for the NCES personnel data collection process and are outlined below.

1. American Council on Education

The Higher Education Panel of the American Council on Education was mentioned above. It is simply one example of a number of significant data collection efforts which have been and are being conducted at ACE. Through its Policy Analysis Service and the leadership role which it plays in the informal Panel on Higher Education Statistics, ACE should continue to play a vital role in the collection of data about personnel in postsecondary education. With support from the National Science Foundation's RANN Program in 1972, Alan Bayer collected data from a national sample of faculty. These data were collected and stored in such a fashion that the faculty who participated can be followed up. Support for this longitudinal study could prove highly valuable in increasing our understanding of college and university faculty members today.

2. Higher Education Research Institute

Soon after Alexander Astin left the American Council on Education to move to UCLA, he founded the Higher Education Research Institute. Under his leadership and that of HERI's executive director, Lewis Solmon, the Higher Education Research Institute has undertaken several studies which have been of significance in understanding postsecondary education personnel issues. Examples of these studies are in the list of references.

3. National Science Foundation

The National Science Foundation continues to play an important role in increasing our understanding of science personnel at the post-secondary level. The most recent example of useful NSF data is a "Report on Faculty Salaries Through the Sub-committee on HUD-Independent Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the United States Senate." Some of the data in this report were collected directly by the National Science Foundation and other data were obtained in special analyses of the Ladd-Lipset 1977 survey of the American professoriate.

4. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), through it State Level Information Base (SLIB) and other projects, has been concerned with approaches to the collection of post-secondary personnel data. References to a series of NCHEMS papers which were prepared for the 1978 American Association for Higher Education meeting are included at the end of this report.

5. Ladd-Lipset Study of the American Professoriate

In terms of current information about faculty personnel, there can be little doubt that the Ladd-Lipset study has added significantly to our knowledge base. This well-designed and extensive study provides a good example of the substance of data which should be included in the faculty components of the longitudinal survey outlined in the preceeding section.

6. College and University Personnel Association (CUPA)

Through its Administrative Compensation Survey Report, the College and University Personnel Association is providing a valuable reference for non-faculty personnel data. Collaboration and cooperation between CUPA and NCES may well be a meaningful next step.

7. TIAA/CREF

Through the impetus of Peggy Heim, TIAA/CREF has undertaken several important one-time surveys such as its current analysis of retirement policies among postsecondary education institutions.

8. UCLA Association of Academic Women*

This data collection effort is cited as an example of the kind of study which is undoubtedly taking place on the campuses of many institutions. The Association of Academic Women at UCLA undertook a one-time survey of new female faculty members at UCLA to determine faculty attitudes on a number of issues and the kinds of support services which faculty felt might be helpful to their professional development.

*More information about the UCLA project can be obtained from Professor Helen Astin, UCLA Graduate School of Education.

PROPOSED DATA ELEMENTS

Data elements will be proposed for each of the three data collection approaches outlined in the model described later.

HEGIS Data

The following data would be important to include in this annual universe data collection effort:

- salary
- fringe benefits
- field/discipline/department (for faculty)
- sex
- race/ethnicity
- rank (for faculty)
- position title for non-faculty (use an approximation of the NCHEMS classification by program and function)
- age
- highest degree
- percentage of full-time
- type of institution
- tenure (yes or no)

Longitudinal sample survey

Not all of these data would be obtained from each cohort of survey participants. During the four-year cycle, however, all of these data should be obtained directly from faculty and/or non-faculty personnel:

- salary
- fringe benefits

field/discipline/department

sex

race/ethnicity

rank (for faculty)

position title for non-faculty (use an approximation of the NCHEMS classification by program and function)

date of last promotion

age

year of degree

highest degree

years since degree

percentage of full-time

type of institution

career history and institutional migration pattern

tenure

outside earnings

faculty activity analysis data such as percentage of time spent on teaching versus research versus service

9-month or 12-month appointment

publication record

retirement plans

marital status

One-time surveys

Any of the data elements outlined above could, of course, be part of the data needed for one-time surveys. In addition to those data elements outlined above, however, it would be useful to obtain some data about undergraduate student-workers and graduate teaching assistants.

DATA ANALYSIS

There are basic issues to be analyzed from each of three perspectives: Federal, State, and institutional. These issues will be outlined and will then be followed by specific questions which can be analyzed with the HEGIS data, longitudinal survey data, and one-time survey data.

Federal perspective

The Federal government is likely to be interested in the following issues:

1. Affirmative action and salary equity between sexes.
2. What are the patterns of personnel migration among postsecondary education institutions and between postsecondary education institutions and employing organizations outside the educational sector?
3. What is the impact of extending mandatory retirement age to 70?
4. To what extent can (and should) faculty (and other personnel) be retained from low-demand to high-demand disciplines?

State perspective

Most State policy-makers are interested in the same analyses outlined under the Federal perspective. The States, however, want State and regional analyses as well as national data.

Institutional perspective

Postsecondary education institutional planners and decision-makers are

interested in inter-institutional comparisons on the following variables:

1. salary by discipline and institutional type

2. retirement patterns by discipline and institutional type

3. promotion and tenure patterns by race, sex, and discipline

4. retraining among disciplines by discipline and institutional type

USES OF DATA

HEGIS data

Below are some of the questions which could be answered with HEGIS data:

1. What is the proportion of faculty who are tenured at different types of institutions in various geographical regions?

2. Which disciplines are decreasing in number of faculty and which disciplines are increasing in the number of faculty?

3. What are the relative pay scales among institutions with different sex distributions among faculty?

4. What are the sex and salary distributions of administrators by specific positions?

5. What proportion of the salary dollars go to faculty, non-faculty professionals and non-professional personnel at various types of institutions?

6. What are the salary differences by region, by institutional type and by discipline?

7. What are the faculty salary differences by academic rank?

8. What is the number and proportion of tenured faculty at each age cohort?

9. To what extent are positions becoming temporary rather than permanent appointment or tenure appointment positions?

10. What is the total number of institutional employees (by institutional type, region, etc.)?

11. What is the average age of the faculty by field or discipline?

Longitudinal sample surveys

1. What are the relative rates of promotion for female and minority faculty members as compared with white male faculty members?

2. In what faculty development activities are faculty participating?

3. What alternative careers are faculty considering?

4. What is the relative status and power of the "new" minority and female faculty members?

5. To what extent are faculty becoming a more nomadic or mobile profession?

6. What is the impact of early retirement programs?

One-time surveys

1. Conduct an analysis of retrained tenured faculty. With what

degree of difficulty are these retrained faculty accepted into a new department?

2. Conduct an analysis of part-time faculty.

   a. What are the rights of part-time faculty who are hired on a continuous basis?

   b. What role are part-time faculty members playing in relationship to full-time faculty?

   c. What is the relative compensation of part-time faculty?

   d. What is the relative work-load of part-time faculty?

   e. What tenure policies are developing for part-time faculty?

   f. What involvement do part-time faculty have in institutional governance?

3. What faculty development and exchange programs are being operated effectively?

4. What is the role of under-graduate student workers in postsecondary education today?

5. What is the role of the graduate teaching assistant in postsecondary education today?

DATA ACCESS

It is strongly recommended that if the propsed data collection model outlined above is adopted, data files should be well-documented and easily

available at reasonable cost and in a timely fashion. It is hoped that problems due to "red-tape" and confidentiality could be minimized. In this fashion the significant data which will be collected will not simply result in the collection of vast amounts of new data, but will in fact encourage and support scholarship as well as policy analysis in the vital area of postsecondary education personnel.

SUMMARY

It is the thesis of this paper that several significant pressures are being brought to bear on postsecondary education today which are having and will have a major impact on personnel issues in postsecondary education. These pressures include the declining number of 18 to 22-year-old students; changes in mandatory retirement policy; affirmative action; a continuing high rate of inflation; and uncertainty regarding taxpayer and donor support for postsecondary education.

While the data alone will not solve these problems or alleviate the pressures, without adequate data the probability that wise decisions will be made is minimized. Using the criteria of institutional burden, taxpayer cost, timeliness of data and data quality, it has been proposed that a three-pronged approach to data collection should be developed. Annual, universe, HEGIS-like surveys of postsecondary education personnel should be continued and strengthened. Data elements should not be expanded greatly, but the data should be reported in a timely fashion. No new annual universe surveys should be added.

A second major thrust would involve the longitudinal analysis of cohorts of faculty and non-faculty personnel. These cohorts would be followed up on a four-year cycle with the substantive thrust of each survey varying somewhat from year to year. Data collected from faculty by ACE in 1972 and by Ladd and Lipset in 1977 provide good examples of the data elements which should be included in these surveys.

The third data collection effort would involve a series of "one-time surveys" on timely topics with quick turnaround time. The American Council

on Education's Higher Education Panel was proposed as a model and possibly the source of data collection for this effort. Several other current data collection efforts were described briefly, specific data elements were proposed for each of the three approaches to data collection and a series of specific data analyses were outlined.

When asked for ideas related to the topic of this paper, a Macalester faculty colleague commented: "As we approach the difficult decade of the '80's, a little less hand-wringing and a little more imagination will be helpful. Let's avoid the mirror image of the projection errors of ten years ago."

It is hoped that this paper may make at least a small contribution to the "imagination" which will be needed in the years ahead.

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